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TO Examiner Roland G. Foster

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MESSAGE

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In re Application of: SHAFFER, Shmuel
Serial No.: 09/643,315
Filing Date: August 21, 2000
Group Art Unit: 2645
Examiner: Roland G. Foster
Title: APARATUS AND METHOD FOR CONTROLLING AN
AUDIO CONFERENCE

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062891.0448

PATENT APPLICATION
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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By Facsimile to (703) 872-9306

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Attached are proposed amendments to the Claims for the Examiner's consideration.
The following amendments are for discussion purposes only and should not be placed in the
permanent file of the Application.

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IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for controlling an audio conference, comprising:
establishing an audio conference between a plurality of devices coupled to a packet network;
~~determining that audio content of media from a particular device is undesirable; and~~
communicating a plurality of selectively mixed signals to a conference administrator device for monitoring, each selectively mixed signal including media from at least two of the devices and excluding media from at least one of the devices;
receiving a command from the conference administrator device to disable media from a particular device; and
disabling the media from the particular device to terminate communication of the media from the particular device to the other devices in the audio conference;
wherein the media is communicated in packets.
2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the media from the particular device comprises audio generated as a result of the particular device placing on hold a call associated with the audio conference.
3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the particular device comprises a private branch exchange servicing a phone used by a conference participant, the private branch exchange operable to communicate audio when the conference participant places on hold a call associated with the audio conference.
4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the audio conference comprises a meet-me conference and further comprising mixing media from the devices using a conference bridge.

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5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein establishing an audio conference comprises:

receiving media from the devices;
mixing media from the devices to generate a plurality of mixed signals;
communicating mixed signals to the devices.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) The method of ~~Claim 6~~, Claim 1, wherein the command comprises an inband dual tone multifrequency signal, a spoken command, or an out-of-band signal from an administrative link.

8. (Currently amended) The method of ~~Claim 6~~, Claim 1, wherein the selectively mixed signals exclude media from devices having the highest average power measurement.

9. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, ~~wherein determining comprises:~~
further comprising:

communicating a plurality of single source signals to ~~a conference~~ the conference administrator device for monitoring, each single source signal generated by one of the devices; and

receiving a second command from the conference administrator device to disable media from the particular device.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 9, wherein the single source signals comprise media from devices having the highest average power measurement.

11. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, ~~wherein determining comprises~~
further comprising identifying power characteristics of media associated with the particular device as indicating a recorded audio segment or broadcast radio.

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12. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
communicating a recorded prompt to the particular device, the recorded prompt
inviting the particular device to rejoin the audio conference; and
receiving a ~~command~~ request to rejoin the audio conference from the particular
device.

13. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 12, wherein the ~~command~~ request
comprises an inband dual tone multifrequency signal, a spoken command, or an out-of-band
signal from an administrative link.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising enabling media from
the particular device to resume communication of media from the particular device to the
other devices in the audio conference.

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15. (Currently amended) A conference bridge, comprising:
a plurality of ports to communicate media with a plurality of devices in an audio conference; and conference;
a media processor operable to receive media from the devices and to selectively mix signals for communication to a conference administrator device for monitoring each selectively mixed signal including media from at least two of the devices and excluding media from at least one of the devices; and
a media controller operable to determine that audio content of media from a particular device is undesirable, the media controller further operable to disable media from the particular device a particular device to terminate communication of the media from the particular device to the other devices in the audio conference; conference in response to a command received from the conference administrator device;
wherein the plurality of devices are coupled to the conference bridge using a packet network and the media is communicated in packets.

16. (Currently amended) The conference bridge of Claim 15, further comprising a ~~media processor operable to:~~ the media processor further operable to:
receive media from the devices;
mix media from the devices to generate a plurality of mixed signals; and
communicate mixed signals to the devices.

17. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 15, further comprising a gateway coupled to a selected device in the audio conference using a circuit-switched network, the gateway operable to communicate media between the conference bridge and the circuit-switched network.

18. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 15, wherein:
the ports comprise virtual ports; and
the media comprises packets of audio information.

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19. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 15, wherein the media from the particular device comprises audio generated as a result of the particular device placing on hold a call associated with the audio conference.

20. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 15, wherein the particular device comprises a private branch exchange servicing a phone used by a conference participant, the private branch exchange operable to communicate audio when the conference participant places on hold a call associated with the audio conference.

21. (Currently amended) The conference bridge of Claim 15, wherein:
the conference bridge communicates a recorded prompt to the particular device, the recorded prompt inviting the particular device to rejoin the audio conference; and
the media controller receives a second command to rejoin the audio conference from the particular device.

22. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 15, further comprising a memory operable to store a plurality of conference entries, each conference entry identifying the devices in the audio conference, a power measurement for each device, and a disable status of each device indicating whether media from the device is disabled.

23. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 15, further comprising enabling media from the particular device to resume communication of media from the particular device to the other devices in the audio conference.

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24. (Currently amended) Conference control software embodied in computer readable media and operable to:

establish an audio conference between a plurality of devices coupled to a packet network;

~~determine that audio content of media from a particular device is undesirable; and~~
communicate a plurality of selectively mixed signals to a conference administrator device for monitoring, each selectively mixed signal including media from at least two of the devices and excluding media from at least one of the devices;

receive a command from the conference administrator device to disable media from a particular device; and

disable the media from the particular device to terminate communication of the media from the particular device to the other devices in the audio conference;
wherein the media is communicated in packets.

25. (Original) The conference control software of Claim 24, wherein the media from the particular device comprises audio generated as a result of the particular device placing on hold a call associated with the audio conference.

26. (Original) The conference control software of Claim 24, wherein the particular device comprises a private branch exchange servicing a phone used by a conference participant, the private branch exchange operable to communicate audio when the conference participant places on hold a call associated with the audio conference.

27. (Original) The conference control software of Claim 24, wherein the audio conference comprises a meet-me conference and further comprising mixing media from the devices using a conference bridge.

28. (Original) The conference control software of Claim 24, wherein establishing an audio conference comprises:

receiving media from the devices;

mixing media from the devices to generate a plurality of mixed signals;

communicating mixed signals to the devices.

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29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently amended) The conference control software of ~~Claim 29, Claim 24,~~ wherein the command comprises an inband dual tone multifrequency signal, a spoken command, or an out-of-band signal from an administrative link.

31. (Currently amended) The conference control software of ~~Claim 29, Claim 24,~~ wherein the selectively mixed signals exclude media from devices having the highest average power measurement.

32. (Currently amended) The conference control software of Claim 24, wherein ~~determining comprises:~~ further operable to:
~~communicating~~ communicate a plurality of single source signals to a ~~conference the~~
~~conference~~ administrator device for monitoring, each single source signal generated by one of
the devices; and
~~receiving a~~ receive a second command from the conference administrator device to
disable media from the particular device.

33. (Original) The conference control software of Claim 32, wherein the single source signals comprise media from devices having the highest average power measurement.

34. (Currently amended) The conference control software of Claim 24, wherein ~~determining comprises identifying~~ further operable to identify power characteristics of media associated with the particular device as indicating a recorded audio segment or broadcast radio.

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35. (Currently amended) The conference control software of Claim 24, further ~~comprising: further operable to:~~
~~communicating~~ communicate a recorded prompt to the particular device, the recorded prompt inviting the particular device to rejoin the audio conference; and
~~receiving a command~~ receive a request to rejoin the audio conference from the particular device.

36. (Currently amended) The conference control software of Claim 24, further ~~comprising: enabling~~ operable to enable media from the particular device to resume communication of media from the particular device to the other devices in the audio conference.

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37. (Currently amended) A conference bridge, comprising:
means for establishing an audio conference between a plurality of devices coupled to a packet network;

~~means for determining that audio content of media from a particular device is undesirable; and~~

means for communicating a plurality of selectively mixed signals to a conference administrator device for monitoring, each selectively mixed signal including media from at least two of the devices and excluding media from at least one of the devices;

means for receiving a command from the conference administrator device to disable media from a particular device; and

means for disabling the media from the particular device to terminate communication of the media from the particular device to the other devices in the audio conference;
wherein the media is communicated in packets.

38. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 37, wherein the particular device comprises a private branch exchange servicing a phone used by a conference participant, the private branch exchange operable to communicate audio when the conference participant places on hold a call associated with the audio conference.

39. (Original) The conference bridge of Claim 37, wherein the means for establishing an audio conference comprises:

means for receiving media from the devices;

means for mixing media from the devices to generate a plurality of mixed signals;

means for communicating mixed signals to the devices.

40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently amended) The conference bridge of Claim 37, further comprising:
communicating a recorded prompt to the particular device, the recorded prompt inviting the particular device to rejoin the audio conference; and
receiving a ~~command~~ request to rejoin the audio conference from the particular device.

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42. (Canceled)

43. (Canceled)

44. (Canceled)

45. (Canceled)

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46. (Currently amended) A method for remotely managing an audio conference through control of a conference bridge, comprising:

participating in an audio conference established by a conference bridge coupled to a packet network;

~~monitoring media from a plurality of devices in the audio conference to identify audio content from a particular device that is undesirable; and~~

receiving a plurality of selectively mixed signals, each mixed signal excluding media from at least one of the devices;

outputting the selectively mixed signals to a conference administrator;

receiving a selection of a desired mixed signal from the conference administrator, the desired mixed signal excluding media from a particular device;

communicating a command to the conference bridge to terminate communication of the media from the particular device to the other devices in the audio conference;

wherein the media is communicated in packets.

47. (Original) The method of Claim 46, wherein the command comprises an inband dual tone multifrequency signal, a spoken command, or an out-of-band signal communicated using an administrative link.

48. (Original) The method of Claim 46, wherein the particular device comprises a private branch exchange servicing a phone used by a conference participant, the private branch exchange operable to communicate audio when the conference participant places on hold a call associated with the audio conference.

49. (Canceled)

50. (Currently amended) The method of ~~Claim 49~~, Claim 46, wherein the selectively mixed signals exclude media from devices having the highest average power measurement.

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51. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 46, ~~wherein monitoring comprises:~~ further comprising:

receiving a plurality of single source signals, each single source signal generated by one of the devices;

outputting the single source signals to ~~a conferencee~~ the conference administrator; and

receiving a selection of an offending single source signal from the conference administrator, the offending single source signal comprises media from the particular device.

52. (Original) The method of Claim 51, wherein the single source signals comprise media from devices having the highest average power measurement.

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Respectfully submitted,

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^{May 2}
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